Budget 2022

Submission from the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA)

30 September 2021

1. Introduction

IDEA represents over 80 members involved in the practice, promotion and advancement of Development Education. Together we work to strengthen Development Education in Ireland and to raise awareness of the crucial role it has in fostering global citizenship and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Development Education enables people to understand the world around them and to act to transform it. It works to tackle the root causes of injustice and inequality, globally and locally to create a more just and sustainable future for everyone. It is necessary to ensure all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to be active global citizens capable of promoting sustainable and equitable development and fulfilling the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

It's practiced by a range of actors, including Development NGOs, youth, community and voluntary organisations, educational institutions and networks, trade unions, educators, researchers and activists, and takes place in formal, non-formal and informal settings, engaging hundreds of thousands of people across all ages and communities throughout the island of Ireland each year. IDEA uses Development Education as a term that includes Global Citizenship Education, Education for Sustainable Development, and related terms. Our members sometimes use different terms for their work, depending on the nature of their work, or their areas of specialism. We are aware that different government departments use different terms for this area, for example Development Education, Global Citizenship Education, Education for Sustainable Development, or Environmental Education. Therefore, for the purpose of this document, we use the term Development Education, on the understanding that we are including all relevant terms and approaches within the area of education for global citizenship and sustainable development. Regardless of what term is used, we are committed to continuing to work together to reach all learners in Ireland and to enable them as active global citizens.

Ireland is recognised at European and International level as a leader in Development Education, due to its support structures and the quality of its programmes and organisations.

IDEA and our members recently worked together to articulate our Vision 2025 - a vision that builds on our strengths and sets out an ambition for the future of Development Education in Ireland that is equal to the scale, importance, and urgency of the challenges we face as a local and global society. In Vision 2025 we focussed on:

1. Why we need Development Education
2. Our aims for Development Education
3. What's needed to deliver Vision 2025

We hope that Vision 2025 will initiate a new dialogue between the Development Education sector and our stakeholders, about the strategic prioritisation, policy coherence and investment agenda for Development Education.

2. Why we need Development Education

We live at a critical time, when we face climate, economic and political crises, unprecedented in our lifetimes.

- Climate change and climate justice require urgent action.
- Economic inequality is at record highs and intensifying.
- Racist and anti-migrant narratives, the rise of far-right politics and the spread of conspiracy theories and false information threaten democracy and our values of human rights, equality, and sustainability.
- Civil society space is under threat and shrinking.
- Progress towards achievement of the SDGs is lagging in crucial areas.
- Covid 19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities and created new sites of inequality.

But there are also growing movements of active global citizens seeking change. Informed and engaged citizens, including young people and people of colour in the recent Black Lives Matter and climate action movements, are confronting racism and lack of action on climate change, and demanding a better world.

This challenges all of us - it challenges how we view international development and how we achieve equality, justice, and a sustainable world. By strengthening global citizenship, sustainability, democracy and human rights, Development Education is at the heart of society's response to the challenges we face.

Building a strong Development Education sector will also enable delivery of key parts of the Government's Programme for Government and fulfilment of Ireland's

commitments to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

3. Our aims for Development Education

By strengthening global citizenship, sustainability, democracy and human rights, Development Education is at the heart of society's response to the many challenges we face today.

IDEA members aim to;

- o Deliver life-long, quality Development Education.
- o Reach all people in our society through formal, informal and non-formal education.

Our sector aims to create a society of active global citizens by delivering life-long, quality Development Education that;

- o Explores the root causes of local and global injustices and inequalities in our interdependent world.
- o Is explicit about the ethos of Development Education – global solidarity, empathy and partnership, and challenging unequal power relations across all issues we work on.
- o Encourages critical thinking in our exploration of local and global justice issues and seeking of solutions.
- o Uses participatory and creative methodologies that reflect our ethos.
- o Builds skills for informed, meaningful action that is collective in nature.
- o Contributes to imagining and exploring solutions for a better world.
- o Is accessible to all learners through Formal, Youth, Adult and Community Education institutions and settings.

Fulfilling these aims is crucial if we, as a society, are to achieve behavioural and societal change, and reverse growing threats to democracy.

To achieve our vision, we aim to reach all people in Ireland with quality Development Education. We aim;

- o to deliver Development Education engagements throughout the formal education system,
- o to deliver life-long learning to Ireland's young people and adults by embedding quality Development Education engagements throughout the Youth and Adult & Community Education sectors.

- o to reach new and hard-to-reach communities through both the existing education infrastructure and by new initiatives, including via digital technologies.

4. What's needed to deliver VISION 2025

4.1 Funding

Substantial increased investment is needed to achieve the full potential of Development Education in Ireland. In 2014, total funding for Development Education had fallen to less than 51% of what it was in 2008, and, at the time of writing, it is still 9% lower than 2008. This is far short of what is needed to achieve Vision 2025 and fulfil the potential of Development Education in Ireland. The 2018 Report of the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade and Defence stated that, '[1] there is a concern around the low levels of funding for communicating the results of Ireland's development programme and educating people throughout the country about overseas development'.

The rate of investment in Development Education has not been in line with overall increases in the aid budget, and IDEA estimates that the Development Education budget accounts for just 0.6% of ODA in 2021. To enable Vision 2025, Irish Aid ring-fenced funding for Development Education in Ireland needs to be increased from approximately 0.6% of Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2021 to reach the European benchmark of 3% of ODA by 2025, as called for in the 'Envision 4.7: Roadmap in Support of SDG target 4.7' [2].

A phased approach, with manageable annual increases of between 0.2% and 0.7% of ODA from 2021, would see that the 3% target is reached by 2025. The phased increase could be achieved as follows:

- by 2021, reaching 0.8% of ODA [increase of 0.2%];
- by 2022, 1.2% [increase of 0.4%];
- by 2023, 1.7% [increase of 0.5%];
- by 2024, 2.3% [increase of 0.6%]
- by 2025, 3% [increase of 0.7%]).

In addition, the Department of Education and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science National Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development provides another major opportunity for the advancement of Development Education in Ireland. IDEA members will be key actors in the implementation of the new strategy, and it is crucial that adequate funding is allocated to ensure the new strategy's successful implementation.

Also, Development Education should be included as funding lines in the Climate Action Plan and National Action Plan Against Racism, and other relevant public policies.

4.2 Cross-government and institutional strategic prioritisation and policy coherence for Development Education

IDEA members work across a broad spectrum of Irish society and in many different institutions and settings. Development Education needs a supportive and coherent policy context. It should be an important element of many different government policy areas, including finance, international development, education, climate action, justice, youth, community development, and more. We need the sustained engagement of those involved in Government and state institutions, as well as high strategic prioritisation of Development Education across Government departments.

- Coordination is needed between key policies, including the Irish Aid Strategy on Development and Global Citizenship Education, National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development, National Youth Strategy, Further Education and Training Strategy, The Climate Action Plan, The National Action Plan Against Racism, and the National Volunteering Strategy (2021–2025).

- Coordination is also needed between relevant Government departments, along with integration of Development Education into their policies and programmes. These should include the Department of Education, Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, and other relevant departments.

- Development Education needs to be central to Ireland's Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan, which should be led by the Department of An Taoiseach.

- Integration and prioritisation of Development Education in relevant institutions and networks is also necessary. These include Education and Training Boards, schools' networks, youth sector bodies and third level institutions.

- Coordination mechanisms should be developed to enable cross-departmental coordination of Development Education-related policies, and for integration into key institutions and networks.

5. Conclusion

The amount and form of investment proposed in Vision 2025, coupled with the coherent policy framework proposed above, would enable the sector to reach people across society, through formal, non-formal and informal education; to develop education and professional development programmes and build organisational support; to build capacity of educators, create quality resources, undertake research to inform policy and practice, develop curriculum, and monitor & evaluate our work for optimum impact. This would greatly increase and strengthen our capacities to plan and deliver Development Education in a cohesive and holistic form.

We need to achieve Vision 2025, not only as a Development Education sector, but as a society, so that we have the capabilities to face unprecedented challenges and crises with hope and confidence. We need to become a society of active global citizens capable of understanding and changing our local and global societies.

Development Education has a hugely important role to play in rising to these challenges and in creating a better world. We have the expertise and the potential to achieve this vision. We now need to scale-up, to strengthen our sector and its capacity to reach hard-to- reach communities and deliver life-long, quality Development Education to all learners.

Out key requirements to deliver Vision 2025;

- A phased approach that would see that the 3% of ODA funding for Development Education target is reached by 2025.
- Cross-government and institutional strategic prioritisation and policy coherence for Development Education.

Notes

1. Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade and Defence, Review of the Irish Aid Programme February 2018 https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_foreign_affairs_and_trade_and_defence/reports/2018/2018-02-22_report-review-of-the-irish-aid-programme_en.pdf

2. Envision 4.7: Roadmap in Support of SDG Target 7 B Roadmap https://www.bridge47.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/envision_4.7_roadmap_0.pdf